

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2908

AN ACT

To adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Bison Legacy
3 Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) bison are considered a historical symbol of
7 the United States;

8 (2) bison were integrally linked with the eco-
9 nomic and spiritual lives of many Indian tribes
10 through trade and sacred ceremonies;

11 (3) there are more than 60 Indian tribes par-
12 ticipating in the Intertribal Buffalo Council;

13 (4) numerous members of Indian tribes are in-
14 volved in bison restoration on tribal land;

15 (5) members of Indian tribes have a combined
16 herd on more than 1,000,000 acres of tribal land;

17 (6) the Intertribal Buffalo Council is a tribal
18 organization incorporated pursuant to section 17 of
19 the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the
20 “Indian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 477);

21 (7) bison can play an important role in improv-
22 ing the types of grasses found in landscapes to the
23 benefit of grasslands;

24 (8) a small group of ranchers helped save bison
25 from extinction in the late 1800s by gathering the
26 remnants of the decimated herds;

1 (9) bison hold significant economic value for
2 private producers and rural communities;

3 (10) according to the 2012 Census of Agri-
4 culture of the Department of Agriculture, as of
5 2012, 162,110 head of bison were under the stew-
6 ardsip of private producers, creating jobs and pro-
7 viding a sustainable and healthy meat source con-
8 tributing to the food security of the United States;

9 (11) on December 8, 1905, William Hornaday,
10 Theodore Roosevelt, and others formed the Amer-
11 ican Bison Society in response to the near extinction
12 of bison in the United States;

13 (12) on October 11, 1907, the American Bison
14 Society sent 15 captive-bred bison from the New
15 York Zoological Park, now known as the “Bronx
16 Zoo”, to the first wildlife refuge in the United
17 States, which was known as the “Wichita Mountains
18 Wildlife Refuge”, resulting in the first successful re-
19 introduction of a mammal species on the brink of ex-
20 tinction back into the natural habitat of the species;

21 (13) in 2005, the American Bison Society was
22 reestablished, bringing together bison ranchers,
23 managers from Indian tribes, Federal and State
24 agencies, conservation organizations, and natural
25 and social scientists from the United States, Can-

1 ada, and Mexico to create a vision for the North
2 American bison in the 21st century;

3 (14) there are bison herds in National Wildlife
4 Refuges and National Parks;

5 (15) there are bison in State-managed herds
6 across 11 States;

7 (16) there is a growing effort to celebrate and
8 officially recognize the historical, cultural, and eco-
9 nomic significance of the North American bison to
10 the heritage of the United States;

11 (17) a bison is portrayed on 2 State flags;

12 (18) the bison has been adopted by 3 States as
13 the official mammal or animal of those States;

14 (19) a bison has been depicted on the official
15 seal of the Department of the Interior since 1912;

16 (20) the buffalo nickel played an important role
17 in modernizing the currency of the United States;

18 (21) several sports teams have the bison as a
19 mascot, which highlights the iconic significance of
20 bison in the United States;

21 (22) in the 2nd session of the 113th Congress,
22 22 Senators led a successful effort to enact a resolu-
23 tion to designate November 1, 2014, as the third an-
24 nual National Bison Day; and

1 (23) members of Indian tribes, bison producers,
2 conservationists, sportsmen, educators, and other
3 public and private partners have participated in the
4 annual National Bison Day celebration at several
5 events across the United States and are committed
6 to continuing this tradition annually on the first
7 Saturday of November.

8 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE NORTH**
9 **AMERICAN BISON AS THE NATIONAL MAM-**
10 **MAL.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The mammal commonly known as
12 the “North American bison” is adopted as the national
13 mammal of the United States.

14 (b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
15 or the adoption of the North American bison as the na-
16 tional mammal of the United States shall be construed
17 or used as a reason to alter, change, modify, or otherwise
18 affect any plan, policy, management decision, regulation,
19 or other action by the Federal Government.

 Passed the House of Representatives April 26, 2016.

Attest:

Clerk.

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